

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

November 25, 2003

The Honorable Michael O. Leavitt  
Administrator  
United States Environmental Protection Agency  
1200 Pennsylvania Ave, NW  
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Administrator Leavitt:

Congratulations on your recent appointment as Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency. Safeguarding our environment is one of our most important responsibilities and we are pleased that you have accepted this challenge.

We would also like to take this opportunity to request a meeting with you to discuss our efforts to restore the Great Lakes. As you know, the Great Lakes system accounts for 20 percent of the world's fresh surface water and more than 90 percent of the United States supply. Significantly, the Great Lakes are the source of drinking water for more than 28 million Americans. Industrialization has taken a tremendous toll on the Great Lakes and despite 30 years of progress following the passage of the Clean Water Act, the Lakes still face myriad threats.

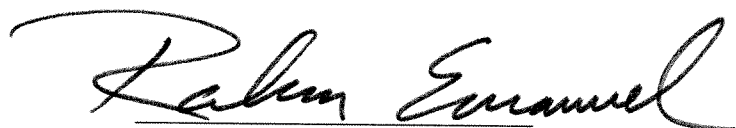
To address these issues we have introduced HR 2720, "The Great Lakes Restoration Financing Act of 2003." Similar legislation has been introduced in the Senate. Both HR 2720 and S. 1398 are bipartisan bills with broad support, and both provide substantial funding for Great Lakes restoration. The House bill, for example, has garnered the support of 104 cosponsors and endorsements from a broad range of groups such as Lake Michigan Federation, Ducks Unlimited, American Fisheries Society, and National Marine Manufacturers Association. Further, both bills have been endorsed by the Council of Great Lakes Governors, as well as the Great Lakes Cities Initiatives, a consortium of mayors from the Great Lakes region.

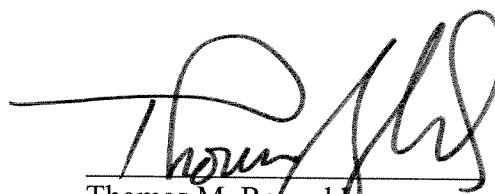
We have included a more detailed description of the two bills, but briefly, each provides meaningful funding for Lakes restoration, and are based on the "Great Lakes Strategy 2002," which your predecessor released in the spring of 2002. The funding authorized under both bills would be used to combat invasive species, remediate toxic sediments, stop pollution from urban and agricultural runoff, as well as restore and preserve coastal wetlands and critical habitat. Both bills also develop a framework for a strong working relationship between all parties with a stake in the Great Lakes, including federal, state, and local governments, as well as business, environmental and the scientific communities.

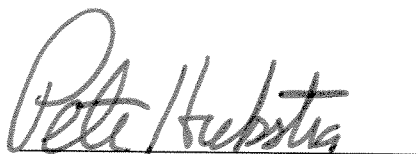
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Again, congratulations on your appointment and we look forward to meeting with you. The Great Lakes are a national treasure and one we must protect for future generations. We hope that you will continue the work of your predecessor and take a strong interest in this issue so vital to nearly 30 million Americans.

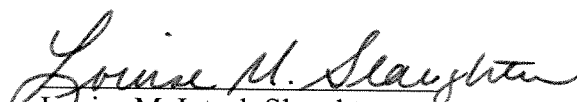
Sincerely,

  
Rahm Emanuel

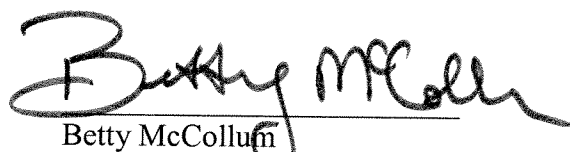
  
Thomas M. Reynolds

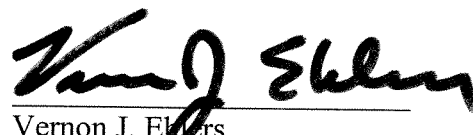
  
Peter Hoekstra

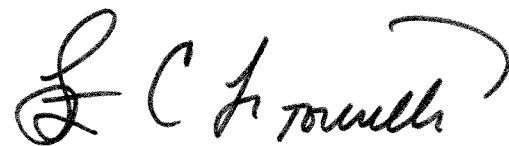
  
Mark Steven Kirk

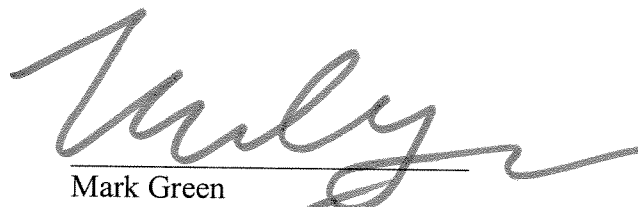
  
Louise McIntosh Slaughter

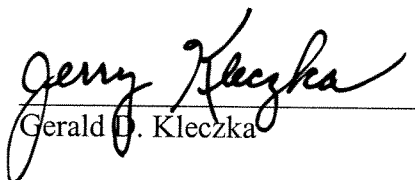
  
Mark R. Kennedy

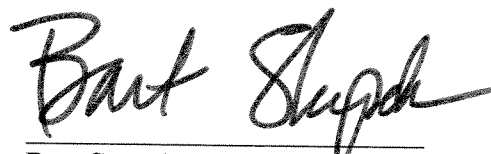
  
Betty McCollum

  
Vernon J. Evers

  
Steven C. LaTourette

  
Mark Green

  
Gerald D. Kleczka

  
Bart Stupak